

"One Tin Soldier"

Sometime in the early 1970's, Lambert-Potter wrote the song, "One Tin Soldier". For some reason, **the recesses of my mind have conjured-up this song-of-old** and, where better to share the memory, than the seemingly applicable Web page, "Soldier Boy".

In the early '70's, I was anywhere from 12 to 14 years old; and like most kids of the day, pop music was a keen interest. Listening on the few, local radio stations in my Low Country domicile of Beaufort, "One Tin Soldier" made its debut as a somewhat throwback to

**"...There won't be any trumpets blowing come the judgment day,
On the bloody morning after....One tin soldier rides away"**

- "One Tin Soldier", Lambert-Potter, music from the movie, *Billy Jack*...

the folk-music of the last decade...and prior. The lyrics (provided below) suggest the usual legend-style tribute that exists among folk music: folk heroes made popular or memorable by folk music. What also propelled the popularity of this song was its use in the movie series, ***Billy Jack*** - that featured the unstoppable martial hearts of a green beret, American-Indian who stood against the corruption and bigotry of the local establishment of a small town.

Referring back to the song, the lyrics; the condition is that the "mountain people" have this "treasure". The "valley people", aware of the treasure (or something of apparent value) want it - and are willing to do anything to get it. **An ultimatum is given to the mountain people: turn-over/give-up the treasure, or we (the valley people) will destroy you.** The mountain people reply that they are willing to share it, but will not turn it over or give it up; hence, the valley peoples attack and destroy them. In the end, **the treasure is found to be simply the words, "Peace on Earth"...and the "Tin Soldier" - whoever he is - simply rides away..**

The moral to this story is that greed, jealousy, and possessiveness cause division, destruction and despair. Nothing good can come from some wanton and unjustified behavior - save the one champion who is unstoppable.

"One Tin Soldier" by Lambert-Potter

Listen, children, to a story
That was written long ago,
'Bout a kingdom on a mountain
And the valley-folk below.

On the mountain was a treasure
Buried deep beneath the stone,
And the valley-people swore
They'd have it for their very own.

So the people of the valley
Sent a message up the hill,
Asking for the buried treasure,
Tons of gold for which they'd kill.

Came an answer from the kingdom,
"With our brothers we will share
All the secrets of our mountain,
All the riches buried there."

Now the valley cried with anger,
"Mount your horses! Draw your sword!"
And they killed the mountain-people,
So they won their just reward.

Now they stood beside the treasure,
On the mountain, dark and red.
Turned the stone and looked beneath it...
"Peace on Earth" was all it said.

Go ahead and hate your neighbor,
Go ahead and cheat a friend.
Do it in the name of Heaven,
You can justify it in the end.
There won't be any trumpets blowing
Come the judgment day,
On the bloody morning after....
One tin soldier rides away.